



Virginia Clean Marina Program

Background

The Virginia Clean Marina Program is designed as a voluntary program to address a broad range of issues related to the potential environmental impacts of marina operations. The Program was initiated as an implementation element of the Virginia Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program (CNPCP). The Clean Marina Program is one of many key activities that allow Virginia to be in compliance with Section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990.

This project is being funded through a cooperative effort by the Virginia Coastal Resources Management Program at the Department of Environmental Quality, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Virginia Sea Grant office at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of Coastal Resources Management.

This cooperative effort brings together public and private interests through the Marina Technical and Environmental Advisory Committee (MTEAC). This Committee consists of representatives from state agencies, the marine trade industry, recreational boating, planning and design, and the environmental community.

The main purpose of the Clean Marina Program is to provide information, guidance, and technical assistance to marinas, local governments, and recreational boaters in Virginia's coastal zone on how to minimize their impacts on water quality and coastal resources. To accomplish this, a Marina Technical Advisory Program has been established. The Marina Technical Advisory Program will focus on developing technical information regarding economic and environmental issues. The Marina Technical Advisory Program will also focus on working with marinas to achieve voluntary designation as a Virginia Clean Marina.

Virginia Clean Marina Process

Virginia Clean Marina designation is achieved by following these steps:

- **Pledge**
At any time a marina operator may pledge to work towards becoming a Virginia Clean Marina. Marinas that have pledged will be recognized by the Program at events and in publications.
- **Complete the Self-Assessment**
Marina operators will conduct a self-assessment using a evaluation checklist, which contains criteria taken directly from the Clean Marina Guidebook. The operator only needs to answer those criteria applicable to their operation.
- **Host a Site Visit**
An operator then submits a completed checklist and requests a formal site visit from the Marina Technical and Environmental Advisory Committee. If the results of the small group site visit confirm the adequate assessment scores, a recommendation for Clean Marina designation is made to the full Marina Technical and Environmental Advisory Committee. *(At any time, a marina operator can request an informal site visit by the Marina Specialist at VIMS as a precur-*

sor to the formal visit.)

If the staff person finds a marina does not meet the minimum requirements the marina operator will be asked to continue the pledge to work towards designation; the Marina specialist and other staff (if needed) will work with the operators to achieve designation.

· **Report Annually**

Designated facilities will report annually to retain their designation and be encouraged to consider additional projects that prevent pollution.

Benefits of Becoming a Virginia Clean Marina

Studies show that those marinas where these best management practices have been implemented are able to receive slightly higher slip rental rates and have lower vacancy rates by their patrons. It is also anticipated that some level of regulatory flexibility will accrue to the marina as a result of these voluntary efforts.

Participation in the Virginia Clean Marina Program can result in the following benefits.

- Protects and improves water quality in the immediate vicinity of the marina.
- Displays commitment to the environment and creates an aesthetically-pleasing facility that will attract responsible boaters who respect and follow good boating practices.
- Reduces costs associated with waste disposal.
- Free technical assistance through the Marina Technical Advisory Program.
- Improves water quality and habitat for living resources.
- Formal recognition of a marina's accomplishment through an awards ceremony.
- Use of the Virginia Clean Marina logo. The logo may be used in advertising and on the marina's letterhead.
- Free advertising for the marina through newsletter articles, listing on the clean marina website, and being used as examples at boat shows and in workshops.
- Improved worker safety, ensured regulatory compliance, and decreased legal liabilities.

Virginia Naturally

The Clean Marina Program is registered as a contributing project to Virginia's environmental education initiative, *Virginia Naturally*. The Program contributes to environmental education through;

- Development of a Clean Marina Guidebook
- Conducting educational workshops
- Providing materials at boat shows and conferences
- Working closely with marina operators, local and state agencies, and recreational boaters to protect and enhance Virginia's natural resources.

Information developed as part of the Clean Marina Program will be Internet accessible through the Virginia Coastal Program website at <http://www.deq.state.va.us/vacleanmarina/> or through VIMS at <http://www.vims.edu/adv/vamarina>. This site will also include links to other sources of information.